

DIODON HYSTRIX.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Caput: maxillæ offeæ, porrectæ, indivisæ.

Apertura linearis.

Corpus spinis acutis mobilibus undique adspersum.

Pinnæ ventrales nullæ.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 412.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

DIODON sphæricus, aculeis basi triquetris.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 413.

Diod. Ating. γ.

Gmel. Syst. Nat. p. 1450.

Diod. Hystr. γ.

OSTRACION SUBROTUNDUS, aculeis undique densis, basi triquetris.

Art. gen. 60. *Syn.* 86.

ORBIS SPINOSUS.

Will. Ichth. p. 146.

Nullum esse terrestre nisi idem sit aquaticum, in refutando fortasse nimium longus negavit omnino vir doctissimus THOMAS BROWN in libro cui titulus
“ Pseudo-

“ Pseudodoxia Epidemica.” Et orta sane videtur popularis hæc opinio a cute externa animalium multorum æquoreorum et terrestrium fere simili; quæ hac de causa vulgo putantur quasi quodammodo affinia; adeo ut concedi aliquatenus possit quod observavit ingeniosus quidem Gallus de veteribus plantarum symbolis, in sententia erroribus implicita fere æquam esse inter falsum et verum contentionem. Ex animalium marinorum numero quæ terrestribus respondere creduntur vix aliud insignius quam pisces qui in tabula cernitur. Simul atque enim cum spinis undique oblitum intuemur, in mentem statim venit mucronata hystricis lorica. In editione duodecima Systematis Naturæ disposuit eum Linnæus inter *nantes*: (rectius dixisset *nantia*.) Physicis autem recentioribus, quibus amplior anatomices cognitio, visum est id genus animalia ab amphibiiis dissociare, et verum in locum apud pisces amovere. In oceanis Indicis et Americanis præcipue reperitur *Diodon Hystrix*, crescitque interdum in longitudinem pedum duorum; at ut plurimum, multo minor est. Color fusco-pallet. Aculei juxta basin trianguli. Spinas potest vel erigere vel deprimere, corpusque vel inflare vel contrahere. Claudet hanc descriptionem quod subtilitur et acute, ut solet, observavit auctor ille quem in initio memoravi.

Quod si pro concessio habeatur eadem nomina tum terrestribus tum æquoreis animalibus commode satis posse imponi, rigida tamen ratiocinandi lege non nomina dare marinis, sed ab iis sua derivare debent terrestria. Qui enim prius existebant maris incolæ
piores

priores etiam in ipsa natura adepti sunt appellationes. At quoniam eos non nominavit Adamus qui terrenis pro vario ingenio titulos dedit, ab iis qui Adamum secuti sunt ad arbitrium vocabantur, habita ratione animalium quæ ipsi in terris viderant, quæque affinia putabantur, quæ autem sibi propria et peculiaris vocabula habebant ad hos utpote prius creatos nihil spectantia.

THE
PORCUPINE DIODON.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Jaws consisting of undivided bony processes.
Body covered on all sides with sharp moveable spines.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

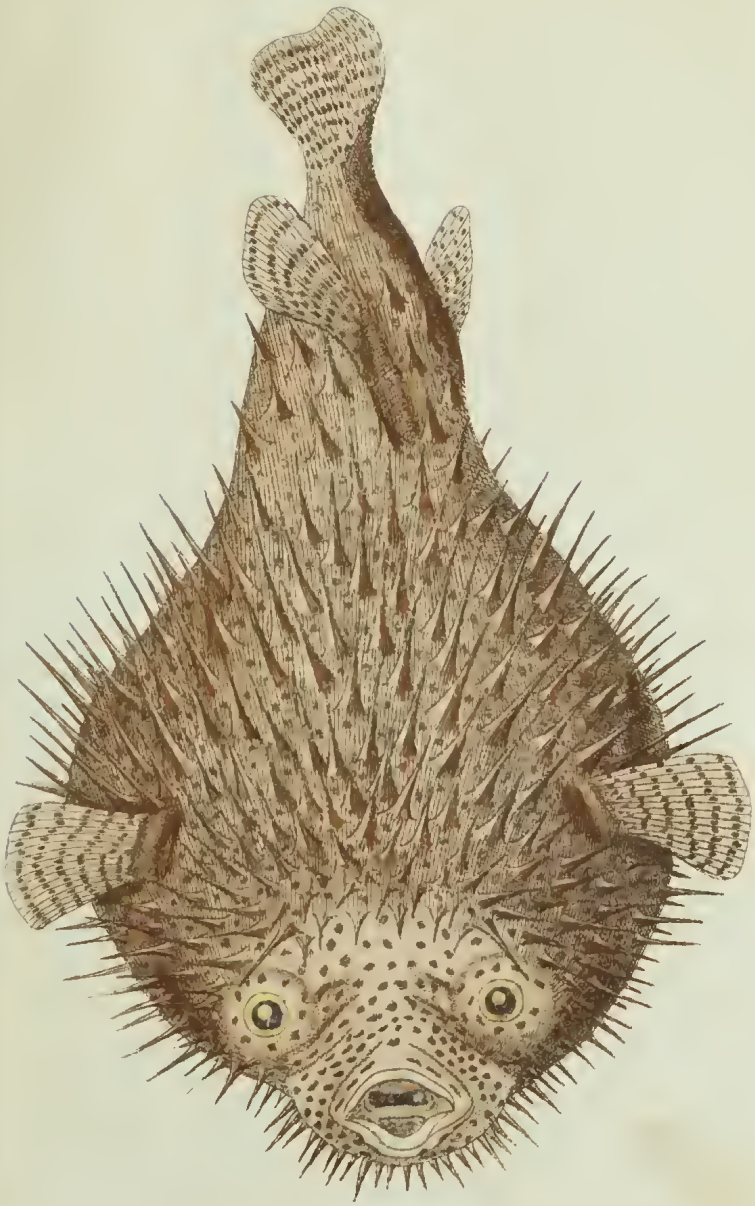
DIODON of an almost spherical shape, with the spines triangular at their base.

THE PRICKLY GLOBE-FISH.

THE PORCUPINE FISH.

THE SEA PORCUPINE.

That all land animals "are in their kind, in the sea," is a popular opinion, commemorated, and with unnecessary prolixity opposed and confuted by the learned Sir Thomas Brown, in his well-known work the Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Vulgar Errors. This idea seems to have arisen from a general resemblance which sometimes takes place between the external coating of several marine animals, and that of some



some terrestrial ones, which may therefore be said, according to common conceptions, to be in some degree allied; and, considered in this point of view, what has been affirmed by an ingenious Frenchman of the old doctrine of botanical signatures, may in great measure be granted, viz. that the notion, though loaded with errors, may be allowed upon the whole to contain almost as many truths as falsehoods. Amongst the animals which stand as examples of this allowable nomination, the fish represented on the plate may serve as a remarkable instance; its spiny appearance naturally bringing to mind the quilly armour of the porcupine. This animal in the twelfth edition of the *Systema Naturæ* of Linnæus, was ranked under the particular division of Amphibia termed *Nantes*, or (as it might with more propriety have stood,) *Nantia*. From a more accurate knowledge however of their anatomical structure than was then known, the naturalists of the present day have pretty generally agreed to remove these creatures from the Amphibia, and to remand them to their proper situation amongst fishes.

The *Diodon Hystrix* is principally found in the Indian and American seas, and grows to a considerable size; having been seen of the length of about two feet. Its more general size is however much smaller. Its colour is a pale brown; and the prickles are of a triangular shape towards their base. The *Diodon* has the power of erecting or depressing its spines in a great degree, as well as of inflating or contracting its body.

In

In addition to what has been said, I shall beg leave to give a quotation from the learned author mentioned at the beginning of this paper, as a curious instance of the peculiar exactness and deep speculations of that celebrated writer.

“ Moreover if we concede that the animals of one
“ element might bear the names of those in the
“ other, yet in strict reason the watery productions
“ should have the prenomination : and they of the
“ land rather derive their names from, than nomi-
“ nate, those of the sea. For the watery plantations
“ were first existent, and as they enjoyed a priority
“ in form, had also in nature precedent denomina-
“ tions ; but falling not under that nomenclature of
“ Adam, which unto terrestrious animals assigned a
“ name appropriate unto their natures ; from suc-
“ ceeding spectators they received arbitrary appel-
“ lations ; and were respectively denominated unto
“ creatures known at land ; who in themselves had
“ independent names, and not to be called after
“ them which were created before them.”